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FM AMEMBASSY VILNIUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3418
INFO ALL NATO POST COLLECTIVE
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY DOHA
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AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY RIYADH

C O N F I D E N T I A L VILNIUS 000194

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/07/2019
TAGS: [MOPS](#) [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [NATO](#) [AF](#) [LH](#)
SUBJECT: LITHUANIA STRAINING TO INCREASE CONTRIBUTIONS TO
AFGHANISTAN

REF: A. STATE 31102
[1](#)B. VILNIUS 172
[1](#)C. VILNIUS 188

Classified By: Ambassador John A. Cloud, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Lithuania is committed to Afghanistan, but its difficult financial situation will make additional contributions challenging. DCM met April 6 with MFA Under Secretary Asta Skaisgiryte-Liauskiene to present ref A requests for specific contributions to Afghanistan. She promised to look more closely at our list, but was able to provide initial reactions. At the same time, she requested U.S. assistance in identifying donor nations to support civilian projects at the Lithuanian PRT, now that Lithuanian funding has had to be slashed (ref B). End summary.

[1](#)2. (C) Skaisgiryte-Liauskiene told DCM that Lithuania is already in the process of increasing its SOF troops in the south. She also gave her opinion that committing to leadership of the Ghor province PRT beyond 2010 would be "no problem," echoing the Defense Minister's comments to the Ambassador several days earlier that Lithuania would stay in Afghanistan as long as NATO does (ref C). Skaisgiryte-Liauskiene added that on the issue of providing a police mentor team, the GOL is still looking into it. The mission would require more than your average policeman, she said, because of training and language requirements. She could not say at this point whether or not Lithuania will be able to meet this request.

[1](#)3. (C) Responding to the request for increasing support to civilian programs, Skaisgiryte-Liauskiene agreed that the GOL would like to do more, but said it needed U.S. help to do so. The recent cuts in Lithuania's budget have meant that the GOL's foreign aid allotment, never adequate for large-scale projects, is even smaller now. Skaisgiryte-Liauskiene said that for projects such as the Herat-Kabul road, the repaving of the airstrip in Chagcharan, and a hospital project, Lithuanian approaches to donors have so far come up short. Talks are ongoing with the Japanese and Kazakhs, but reactions from South Korea and the Gulf states have been "lukewarm." Skaisgiryte-Liauskiene will travel to Oman at the end of April for the EU-GCC Ministerial, and is seeking bilaterals on the margins with the Gulf states to follow up. Her impression, though, is that the Gulf states "are not as interested in Afghanistan as we thought." She requested U.S. help in identifying potential new donors.

[1](#)4. (C) The other challenge, Skaisgiryte-Liauskiene said, is that officials in Kabul don't view Ghor as a priority. Potential donors will tell the GOL that they will make donations, but that it is up to Kabul to determine which projects are funded. She asked for our help in convincing President Karzai to prioritize projects for Ghor.

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